

REMARKS

OF

MR. BUCHANAN, OF PENNSYLVANIA,

IN REPLY TO

MR. SPRAGUE, OF MAINE,

Who had moved to strike out from "The Bill in alteration of the several Acts
imposing duties on Imports,"

THE ADDITIONAL DUTIES WHICH IT PROPOSED

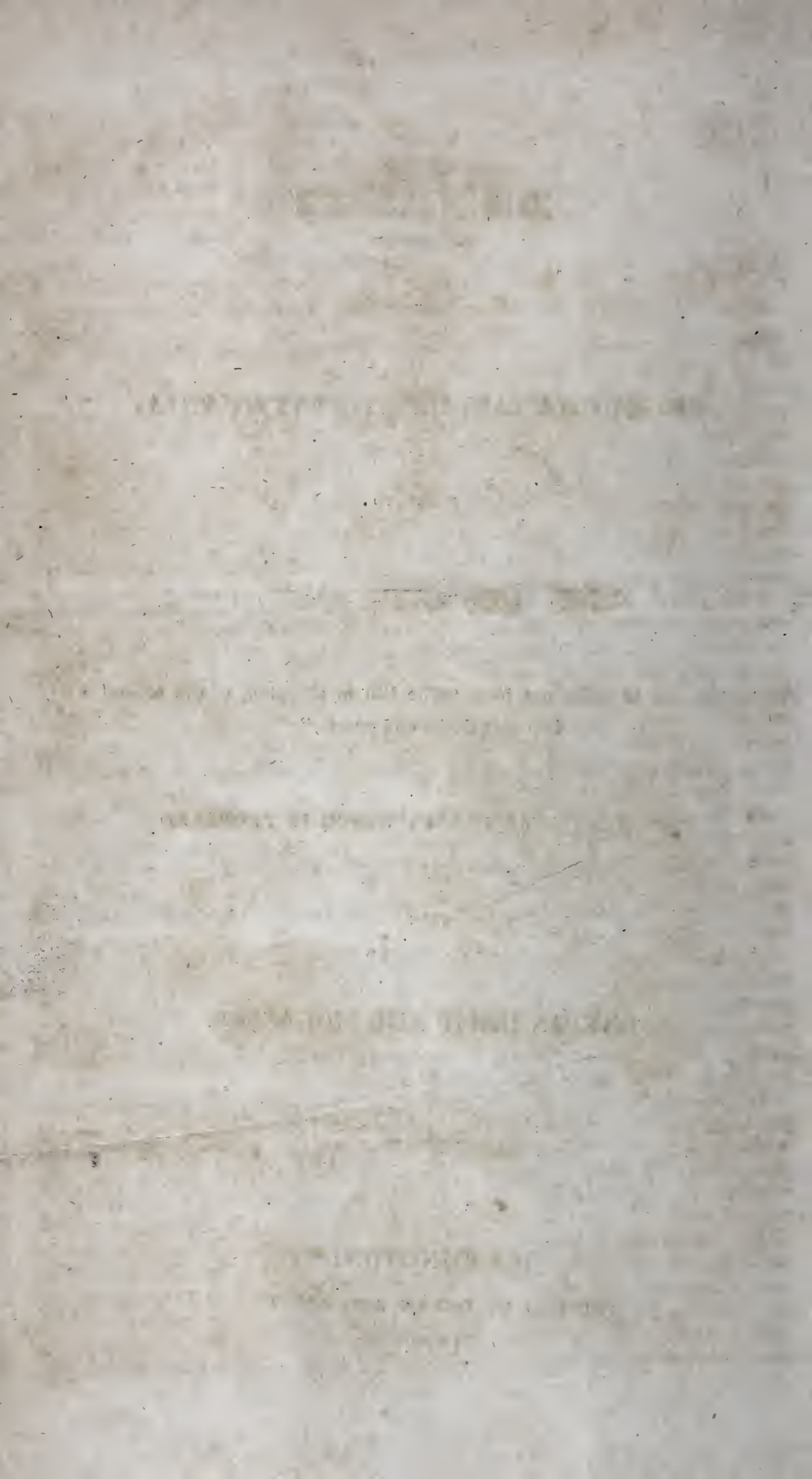
UPON

FOREIGN HEMP AND MOLASSES.

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1828.



REMARKS

After Mr. Sprague had taken his seat, Mr. Buchanan rose, and said:

MR. CHAIRMAN: The gentleman from Maine, (Mr. Sprague,) has treated the Committee of Manufactures with too much severity. There was a bitterness of feeling manifested towards them, in some of his remarks, which I did not expect from that gentleman. He has even attempted to turn them into ridicule, by comparing them with "the three wise men of Gotham, who went to sea in a bowl." This respectable Committee have not only been denounced upon this floor; but I have been informed, upon the best authority, that thousands of pamphlets are now on their way to every portion of the Union, under the frank of members of Congress, charging them with insincerity, and with an intention to destroy that interest which they were bound to protect.

I take leave to tell the gentleman from Maine, it is not upon such declarations, whether they be made publicly in debate, upon this floor, or be circulated privately, in pamphlets, by members of this House, throughout the nation, that the American people will form their judgment. They will judge justly and impartially. They will look to actions rather than words. For the purpose of enabling them to decide who are the sincere friends of domestic industry, I shall, if I should be able to procure them, frank two or three hundred copies of the gentleman's speech, in pamphlet form, into my district.

In the remarks which I intend to make, I shall confine myself strictly to a reply to the arguments of the gentleman from Maine. I shall not attempt to follow him in his splendid career of eloquence. Even if I were able, upon any occasion, to be eloquent, Heaven defend me from such subjects as hemp and molasses! Of all themes, for rhetorical effect, they are the very worst.

The gentleman commenced his remarks by asserting, that it had already been determined, we would afford no additional protection to wool and woollens; and that the provisions of the bill reported by the Committee, if enacted into a law, would ruin both the wool grower and the manufacturer. After having assumed these positions, the gentleman proceeded to attack almost every other item of the bill.

Is the statement of the gentleman correct, that the bill affords no additional protection to the grower and manufacturer of wool? What is the truth of the case? I have felt, and still feel anxious, that a Tariff should pass during the present session. No slight difference of opinion shall prevent me from giving such votes, as shall be best calculated to accomplish this purpose. I gave the strongest evidence of such a disposition, when, a few days ago, I moved to strike out the minimums from the second amendment, offered by the gentleman from Vermont. (Mr. Mallery.) Had my proposition prevailed, fifty per cent. would have been added to the present rate of duty upon woollen goods, costing more than thirty-three and a third cents the square yard; whilst one hundred per cent. would have been added to the duty upon some of those articles costing less than

that amount. I distinctly declared to the Committee that I was prepared to vote for such a measure. This was a greater increase of *ad valorem* duty, than has ever been made by Congress at one time, upon any other article. How was this proposition received? Was there a single member from the Eastern States willing to meet the spirit of compromise which dictated my motion? No, Sir. The language of one and all of them has been—We must have the amendment, in regard to woollens, recommended by the Harrisburg Convention, or we will have nothing. I did not expect support from the Southern members, because they are opposed, in principle, to any further protection to domestic manufactures. Deserted by both the East and the South, I found myself in a slender minority of thirty or forty votes; and thus ended my attempt to conciliate.

In the course of the debate upon my proposed amendment, the gentleman from New-York, (Mr. Storrs,) to use a homely figure, let the cat out of the bag. He had been most laboriously employed, in making calculations, to ascertain whether the bill reported by the Committee, or my amendment, afforded the greater protection to the woollen manufacturers. I am rejoiced, that upon that occasion, he descended from the lofty flights to which he usually soars, to figures; which, judging from his observations some days ago, I had thought, he despised. His calculations brought him to the conclusion, that the bill was better for the manufacturers than the addition of fifty, and, on some articles, one hundred per cent., to the present rate of duty. His speech has gone to the world.

I shall cheerfully submit to the public judgment, whether the bill, although I dislike the minimum principle which it contains, does not afford sufficient protection to the manufacturers of woollens. I think it does; but I wish it to be distinctly understood, in relation to myself, that I always stand ready, in a fair spirit, to do every thing in my power to promote the passage of a just and a judicious Tariff, which shall be adequate for their protection; and that, for the sake of conciliation, and to effect this purpose, I am willing to sacrifice individual opinion to a considerable extent.

What, Sir, said Mr. B., is the American System? Is it the system advocated by the gentleman from Maine, which would build up one species of domestic industry at the expense of all the rest? which would establish a prohibition and consequent monopoly in favor of the woollen manufacturer, whilst it denied all protection to the farmer? Certainly not. The American System consists in affording an equal and just legislative protection to all the great interests of the country. It is no respecter of persons. It does not distinguish between the farmer who ploughs the soil in Pennsylvania, and the manufacturer of wool in New England. Being impartial, it embraces all.

There is, in one respect, a striking difference between the farmer, and the merchant and manufacturer. The farmer, eating the bread of toil, but of independence, scarcely ever complains. If he suffers, he suffers in silence. You rarely hear him, upon this floor, asking redress for his grievances. He relies with that confidence which belongs to his character, upon the justice of his country, and does not come here with importunate demands. The case is different in regard to the manufacturer and the merchant. When they feel themselves aggrieved—when they require the aid of your legislation, their complaints ring throughout the country from Georgia to Maine. They never cease to ask, until they obtain. And shall this contented and uncomplaining disposition of the great agricultural interest, be used as an argument, upon this floor, against affording it relief? I trust not.

The gentleman from Maine has shown himself not to be a true disciple of the Harrisburg Convention School. Even that Convention, although the chief objects of their regard appeared to be wool and woollens, recommended further protection to iron, hemp, flax, and the articles manufactured from them, and to domestic distilled spirits. The gentleman from Maine has moved to strike from the bill the additional duties which it proposes upon the importation of foreign hemp and molasses; and, in his speech, he has argued against any additional duties, either upon iron, or steel, or flax, or foreign spirits. In his opinion, therefore, the American System can embrace no other interest, except that of the growers and manufacturers of wool.

[Here Mr. Sprague explained. He said his observations upon the other items, beside those he had moved to strike from the bill, were only intended to illustrate what would be their effect on the navigating interest.]

Mr. Buchanan resumed. I perceive, from the gentleman's explanation, I did not misunderstand his argument. If this be the American System, I should like to know it as soon as possible; for then I shall be opposed to it. I venture to assert, that if those with whom the gentleman from Maine usually acts upon this floor, have embraced the opinions which he has avowed, it is a vain, a culpable waste of time, to proceed further with this discussion. Let the bill at once go to the tomb of all the Capulets. If the New England manufacturer must be protected, whilst the Pennsylvania farmer is abandoned—if this be the American System, instead of being a mourner at its funeral, I shall rejoice that it has met the fate which it deserved, and has been consigned to an early grave.

The Legislature of Pennsylvania have given us what, in my opinion, is the correct version of the American System. They have declared, that “the best interests of our country demand that every possible exertion should be made to procure the passage of an act of Congress, imposing such duties as will enable our manufacturers to enter into fair competition with foreign manufacturers, and protect the farmer, the growers of hemp and wool, and the distiller of spirits from domestic materials, against foreign competition. The people of Pennsylvania do not ask for such a tariff as would secure to any one class, or to any section of the country, a monopoly. They want a system of protection which will extend its blessings, as well as its burdens, as equally as possible over every part of the Union; to be uniform in its operation upon the rich as well as the poor.” They have therefore instructed their Senators, and requested their Representatives, “to procure, if practicable, the establishment of such a tariff as will afford additional protection to our domestic manufactures, especially of woollen and fine cotton goods, glass, and such other articles, as, in their opinion, require the attention of Congress, so as to enable our citizens fairly to compete with foreign enterprise, capital, and experience; and give encouragement to the citizens of the grain growing States, by laying an additional duty upon the importation of foreign spirits, flax, china ware, hemp, wool, and bar iron.”

This resolution speaks a language which I am proud to hear from the Legislature of my native State.

If it be the disposition of a majority of the members of this Committee, to strike out of the bill iron, hemp, foreign spirits, and molasses, no Representative from the State of Pennsylvania, who regards either the interest or the wishes of his constituents, will dare to vote for what would then remain. The time has for ever past when such a measure could

have received our sanction. We shall have no more exclusive tariffs for the benefit of any one portion of the Union. The tariff of 1824 partook much of this character; it contained no additional duty on foreign spirits or molasses, and only added five dollars per ton to the duty on foreign hemp. So far as the grain growing States expected to derive peculiar benefits from that measure, they have been, in a great degree, disappointed.

What was the course which gentlemen pursued in relation to the woollen bill of the last session? I endeavored to introduce into it a small protection for our hemp and domestic spirits. We were then told that my attempt would endanger the fate of the bill; that the period of the session was too late to introduce amendments; and that, if we would then extend protection to the manufactures of wool, a similar protection should, at a future time, be extended to the agricultural interest of the grain growing States. My respectable colleague (Mr. Forward,) has informed the Committee, that he voted for the bill of the last session under this delusion. How sadly the picture is now reversed! When an interest in New England, which has been estimated at \$40,000,000, is at stake, and is now about to sink, as has been alleged, for want of adequate protection, it seems that gentlemen from that portion of the Union would rather consign it to inevitable destruction, than yield the protection which the present bill will afford to the productions of the middle and western States. If they are prepared to act upon a policy so selfish, let them at once declare it, and not waste weeks upon a bill, which can never become a law.

The gentleman from Maine endeavored to sustain his motion by attempting to prove, that, if the duties proposed by the bill should be imposed upon hemp and molasses, it would injure, nay, probably destroy the navigation of the country. Indeed he pronounced its epitaph. It is gone! Five cents per gallon upon molasses, and twenty-five dollars per ton upon hemp, will sink our navigating interest; will sweep our vessels from the ocean! When I compare the strain of eloquence and of argument which the gentleman has employed to strike out hemp and molasses, from this bill, with the object to be attained, he reminds me

“Of ocean into tempest tost
To waft a feather or to drown a fly.”

An additional duty of five cents per gallon on molasses, and twenty-five dollars per ton upon hemp, will consign the navigation of the country to inevitable and almost immediate destruction! This is the kind of argument which the gentleman has thought proper to address to the Committee.

The gentleman from Maine has said, that our navigation goes abroad unprotected to struggle against the world; and he has expatiated, at length, upon this part of the subject. I trust I shall be able to prove, without fatiguing the Committee, that no interest belonging to this or to any other country, ever received a more continued, or a more efficient protection, than the navigation of the United States. I heartily approve this policy. I would not, if I could, withdraw from it an atom of the protection which it now enjoys. I shall never attempt to array the great and leading interests of the country against each other.—I am neither the exclusive advocate of commerce, of manufactures, or of agriculture. The American System embraces them all. I am the advocate of all. When, therefore, I attempt to show to the Committee the protection which has been extended by this government to its navigation, I do it in reply to the argument of the gentleman from Maine, and not in a spirit of hostility to that important interest.

In this attempt, I shall be greatly assisted, by the remarks which I made in 1824, in a reply to a then distinguished member of this House, from Massachusetts. (Mr. Webster.) Although many of the arguments which have been urged by the gentleman from Maine, bear a striking resemblance to those to which I then replied, yet I do not accuse him of plagiarism. The gentleman from Massachusetts, who is now the advocate of the American System, then led the van in favor of the doctrine of free trade. He was, upon that occasion, the member who replied to the great speech which the present Secretary of State delivered, in support of our protecting policy.

The act imposing duties on tonnage, was the third act which passed the Congress of the United States. It became a law on the 20th July, 1789. That act was afterwards repealed, by the act of the 20th July, 1790, which, however, re-enacted in substance, the same provisions. Whilst these acts declare that ships or vessels of the United States, arriving from any foreign port or place, shall pay a duty of only six cents per ton upon each entry, they enact that all foreign vessels shall pay a duty of fifty cents per ton. What, then, was the extent of this protection against foreign competition? ~~For the purpose of illustration,~~ I shall follow the example of the gentleman from Maine, and make my calculations, throughout, upon a vessel of three hundred tons burthen. Under these laws, the tonnage duty which such an American vessel paid upon each entry, was only \$18, whilst that levied upon a foreign vessel of the same burthen, amounted to \$150. I ask the gentleman, is this no protection? In addition to these discriminating duties in favor of our own tonnage, our laws, from the origin of the Federal Government, have added 10 per cent. to the rates of duty upon articles, when imported into this country in a foreign vessel.

In examining the debates of the first Congress, upon the subject of these discriminating duties in favor of our own navigation, I find they were strenuously opposed—upon the very principles which the gentleman from Maine has urged, in opposition to hemp and iron. It was then said, that this discrimination in favor of our navigation, would operate as a tax upon the farmer and planter, with whose produce our vessels were to be freighted, and that, for their benefit, there should be a fair competition between foreign and domestic tonnage. Experience has already demonstrated the fallacy of this argument, as it will demonstrate that of the gentleman from Maine, in case native hemp and native iron should be protected. If you select proper objects for protection, the inevitable consequence of the American System is, eventually to reduce, not to increase, prices. Domestic competition will always ensure this result.

What, Sir, was the effect of this legislative protection upon our tonnage and navigation? Let Mr. Pitkin and Dr. Seybert answer this question. Mr. Pitkin, in his View, declares, that “these extra charges on the navigation and commerce of foreign nations, were sufficient to drive from our ports the greatest proportion of the foreign tonnage. All foreign nations were affected by the system we had adopted in favor of the ship owners in the United States. The diminution of the foreign tonnage employed in our trade, was, with very few exceptions, rapid, regular, and permanent.” Dr. Seybert, in his Statistical Annals, bears the same testimony. He states that “our discriminations operated powerfully in favor of our shipping. Vessels, not of the United States, of 200 tons burthen, on entering our ports, paid £20 sterling, tonnage duty, and for a cargo of £2,000 sterling, they paid £15 sterling extra duty, more than did the vessels of the

United States, of the same tonnage, and laden as aforesaid. These extra charges were sufficient to drive from our ports the greatest proportion of the foreign tonnage. All foreign nations were affected by the system we had adopted; it seemed to operate like magic in favor of the ship owners in the United States. The diminution of the foreign tonnage employed in our trade, was, with very few exceptions, rapid, regular, and permanent."

On the 27th March, 1804, the Congress of the United States enacted, "that a duty of fifty cents per ton, to be denominated "light money," shall be levied and collected on all ships or vessels *not* of the United States," "to be levied and collected in the same manner, and under the same regulations, as the tonnage duties now imposed by law." This act increased the tonnage duty upon the entry of foreign vessels, from fifty cents to one dollar; and therefore, according to the existing laws, whilst American vessels upon each entry, pay a duty of only six cents per ton, foreign vessels pay one dollar. These acts are still in force, and apply to the navigation of all nations, who have not, either by treaty or otherwise, embraced the offer contained in the act of the 3d March, 1815.

This early and wise protection, which operated so powerfully in favor of our foreign tonnage, was still more decisive in its effect upon the tonnage employed in our coasting trade. In this trade, the voyages from port to port of the United States, being, comparatively speaking, but short, the burthen of fifty cents per ton upon each entry, imposed upon foreign vessels, was so onerous, that, in its effect, it soon amounted to an absolute prohibition. In this manner, our own navigation was put in the exclusive possession of the coasting trade, long before the act of 1817 declared "that no goods, wares, or merchandise, shall be imported, under penalty of forfeiture thereof, from one port of the United States, to another port of the United States, *in a vessel belonging wholly or in part to a subject of any foreign power.*"

This act, which, in express terms, prohibited foreigners from all participation in that trade, had no practical effect; because the former discriminating duties had proved to be completely prohibitory.

Whilst the Congress of the United States afforded efficient protection to the ship owner, they did not forget the ship builder. The construction of ships is a most important branch of domestic manufactures, and one which has always been protected by prohibition. American ship builders have always enjoyed an exclusive protection. Your laws very properly naturalize a foreigner after a residence of five years, but no length of time is sufficient to naturalize a ship built in a foreign country. To constitute "a ship or vessel of the United States," it is necessary, not only that it should be owned by a citizen or citizens thereof, *but that it should have been built within the same.* The two exceptions to this general rule, embrace those vessels which are captured by our citizens from a public enemy, and declared to be lawful prize, and those which are condemned for a violation of the revenue laws. There never was a period, in the history of the Federal Government, when an American citizen could purchase from a foreign ship-builder, a vessel built in a foreign country, and have her so naturalized under our laws, as to free her from the imposition of our discriminating duties. The ship builder and the navigator have always moved hand in hand. The same kind of encouragement was afforded to both, and the same success attended that encouragement. We are now able to manufacture ships much cheaper, as I shall show hereafter, than they can be manufactured in Great Britain.

In the two first acts of Congress to which I have referred, imposing duties on tonnage, there is a provision which shows, with how much solicitude, we regarded the manufacture of ships. They contain an exception in favor of vessels built within the United States, and belonging to foreigners. Upon such ships the tonnage duty of fifty cents, exacted upon each entry of a foreign vessel, was reduced to thirty cents. And yet, after all the protection which has been extended to our ship building and navigation, if we are to rely upon the argument of the gentleman from Maine, these great interests of the country are in the very grasp of death; and the small additional imposts, upon hemp and iron, proposed by this bill, will probably be the last ounce which will break the back of the camel!

The navigation employed in our coasting trade is completely protected, from all foreign competition. It enjoys a monopoly. Would it then be unreasonable, if the domestic growers of hemp, and manufacturers of iron, should demand at your hands a similar prohibition in their favor; so far as respects the hemp and iron necessary for the construction and repair of those vessels which are employed in that trade? They have made no such demand. We propose no prohibitory duty. The Committee of Manufactures have proceeded with great moderation in framing their bill. Indeed I think they are justly liable to censure for the slight—the insignificant additional protection of ten cents per gallon upon foreign spirits. I ask, should the duty be less upon a gallon of foreign spirits than on a gallon of Madeira wine, which, under the existing law, pays one dollar? They should both be taxed as articles of luxury. If the rich choose to indulge in their use, let them pay for that indulgence. Indeed, the argument is much stronger in favor of a higher duty on foreign spirits, than on Madeira wine. The use of that wine interferes with no domestic production; whilst each gallon of foreign spirits consumed in the country, takes the place of a gallon of domestic spirits, distilled from the grain of the farmer.

But I have digressed from my subject. Our foreign navigation, like every other interest which has been judiciously selected, soon required no protection to sustain it. By the year 1815 it had become so powerful, that it was prepared to contend against the navigation of the world. All it wanted was a fair field, and the blessing of Heaven upon the contest. The infant had become a giant, ready to go forth, glorying in his might, and confident of victory. It then needed no discriminating duties for its protection. It desired nothing but an equal competition with the world. This government, since that time, has devoted itself with as much anxiety and zeal to obtain for it a free trade with all nations, as it had done to protect its infancy against foreign competition. Its true interest equally dictated both systems of policy. By the act of the 3d March, 1815, we declared that we would admit into our ports the vessels of every nation, carrying articles the produce or manufacture of such nation, without levying any other tonnage or impost duty than was levied on American vessels; provided, such nation would admit into their ports American vessels, laden with American produce or manufactures, without imposing any impost or tonnage duty beyond that which was paid by their own vessels. This act proclaimed a challenge to the world. It was the foundation of all our future policy in regard to navigation. Its wisdom has been tested by experience. We know that no nation on earth can compete with our navigation, upon equal terms.

A few years after the passage of this act, we embarked in what was considered by many a knight-errant expedition, in favor of our navigation. The long established policy of Great Britain had locked up her colonial possessions, against the navigation of all other nations. She thought she had a right to maintain this monopoly. In the face of all her ancient prejudices in favor of her own navigation, the Congress of the United States passed a law in April, 1818, which declared, "that the ports of the United States shall be and remain closed against every vessel owned wholly, or in part, by a subject or subjects of his Britannic Majesty, coming, or arriving from any port or place that is, or shall be, by the ordinary laws of navigation or trade, closed against vessels owned by citizens of the United States." The provisions of this act were considerably extended by those of the supplementary act of May, 1820.

Upon whom did the navigating interest of the country rely, for achieving a victory over the British colonial policy? Upon the patriotism and perseverance of the farmers and planters of your country. They are the persons who were chiefly injured in this struggle. The British government were willing, that there should be a direct trade between our country and their colonies; but they insisted, that it should be carried on exclusively in their own vessels. To the farmer or planter, it could make little difference, whether his products were carried to the West Indies in an English or an American vessel. In either case, they could be exchanged for the same quantity of the products of those islands. The contest was altogether for the carriage; and its result depended chiefly upon the question—Whether our citizens, interested in the trade of the British colonies, or those colonists, could the longest and with the most fortitude endure its destruction. I well recollect the very able memorial from Norfolk, which painted, in glowing colors, the extreme distress to which the loss of that trade had given birth. It declared that, under the operation of the existing laws, their farmers, their merchants, their dealers in timber and lumber, in fact, all classes of their citizens, were deprived, in a great measure, of their former resources, and were, many of them, burdened with debts which they were unable to pay. I also recollect the very able and satisfactory report which you, (Mr. Newton,) as Chairman of the Committee of Commerce, presented upon the subject. It convinced me, that the policy which we were then pursuing was correct. At length the farmers—and other citizens of this country—at the expense of much pecuniary suffering, extorted from the British government the act of Parliament of the 24th June, 1822. By this act, Great Britain surrendered her monopoly, and opened her West India trade to our navigation.

In what manner have we now lost that trade? The gentleman from Maine has thought proper to introduce this question into the debate, and I shall follow him in my reply.—The patience and the perseverance of our agriculturists compelled Great Britain to open her colonial ports. How have they been closed? The gentleman casts the blame altogether upon the British government. I do not stand here as the apologist of that government. It is probable they were glad to be furnished with so good a pretext for closing their colonial ports against our navigation, as the conduct of the present Administration afforded.

But, Sir, is it not an historical fact—for the truth of which I appeal to every gentleman upon this floor—that Great Britain, in 1824, offered to regulate, by treaty, our trade with her colonies, which she had opened in

1822, by legislation? Were not the terms which she proposed perfectly satisfactory to our government, with a single exception? We insisted that our productions should be admitted into the British West Indies, upon the same terms with those of the British colony of Canada. Great Britain resisted this attempt, upon our part, to dictate the manner in which she should regulate her own trade, between her own colonies. She said, that to abandon this power would be a forfeiture of her independence. Upon this point, and this alone, was the negotiation suspended. It was in our power, at any time within two years, to have nailed Great Britain fast to the counter. She could not, in the face of the world, have violated her plighted faith, without losing her character among the nations. Yet this offer of a treaty (which, it is now admitted by all, we ought to have accepted) was not accepted until the time had passed when it was in our power to obtain it.

What have been the consequences of the loss of our direct trade with the West Indies? The President of the United States, in his last annual message, has told us, that neither our commerce, nor our navigation, nor our revenue, has suffered, in consequence of its loss. He has not informed us—he could not inform us—that our agriculture has not suffered. What is the present course of this trade? The owners of the agricultural products which are carried to the West Indies pay two freights, instead of one. This is also the case in regard to the productions of the West Indies which are brought to this country. An American vessel, laden with flour, proceeds to one of the neutral islands. She thus earns her freight. Her cargo is landed, and subjected to a mercantile profit. A British vessel then arrives, and carries the same cargo from the neutral to the British island; and thus she earns her freight also. There are two voyages instead of one, both going to and returning from the British West Indies. Thus both British and American navigation flourish. Each enjoys the same, or nearly the same, profits, to which both are entitled; and the agricultural interest pays the whole additional expense. Well might the President inform us our navigation had not been injured by the loss of the direct trade. I am opposed to this trade, as it is now conducted. It is a heavy burthen upon agriculture. I trust that a Minister may speedily be sent to England, and that we may ascertain whether it is the intention of Great Britain thus for ever to shackle this trade. If it be so, I care not what Administration may be in power, it shall be sustained by me, in any reasonable attempt to obtain justice from the government of that country.

Some time ago, I received a letter from a gentleman in Virginia, which contained much able argument and valuable information. Among other things, it refers to the opinion of a distinguished gentleman, late our minister to England, but now no more, upon the subject of foreign spirits and molasses. That gentleman, (of whom I never have spoken, and never shall speak, but in terms of the highest respect,) when the bill concerning navigation was before the Senate, which was afterwards enacted into a law, on the 18th April, 1818, made the following remarks: “We have the power, and hereafter it may become our policy, as it is that of other countries, to resort to a regulation, the effect of which would go far to balance any disadvantage arising from the loss of the English colonial markets. We import, annually, upwards of six millions gallons of rum, more than half of which comes from the English colonies. We also import, every year, near seven millions of gallons of molasses; as every gallon of molasses yields,

by distillation, a gallon of rum, the rum imported, added to that distilled from imported molasses, is probably equal to twelve millions of gallons, which enormous quantity is chiefly consumed by citizens of the United States.

“If the importation of rum and molasses for distillation, be prohibited, it would require four millions of bushels of grain for distillation, to supply an equal quantity of ardent spirits, and in this way, our agriculture would be indemnified for the loss it might suffer by losing the English colonial markets.”

We have not lost the English colonial markets, but we have lost our direct trade with them. The event which Mr. King apprehended, has now, in a considerable degree, become matter of history. The contingency has happened; and yet, what have the Committee of Manufactures recommended? The prohibition of foreign spirits and molasses, which Mr. King suggested? No! merely an addition of ten cents per gallon to the present duty paid by foreign spirits, and five cents per gallon to the duty paid by molasses; and yet, if we are to yield our faith to the arguments of the gentleman, this increase of duty, will, in its consequences, destroy our fisheries, and drive our fishermen from the ocean.

I shall mention one other example, to show with what care this government has fostered its navigation. France, immediately after she was freed from the long and desolating wars in which she had been engaged, turned her attention towards her commercial marine. It was a principal object of her policy to increase her tonnage. For this purpose, she established discriminating duties in favor of cotton, tobacco, and potashes imported in her own vessels, which were equivalent to a tonnage duty of from \$18 to \$21 per ton. On the 15th May, 1820, we passed an act which imposed a countervailing duty of \$18 per ton upon all French vessels entering the ports of the United States. The consequence of this measure was, the suspension, in a great degree, of the direct trade between this country and France. Who chiefly suffered by this suspension? The tobacco and cotton planters of the South. But they suffered with patience, because they thus expected to acquire for our navigation, the carrying trade to France. We were successful, and in June, 1822, France yielded to our demands; and the consequence has been, that our navigation has acquired nearly the whole carrying trade between the two countries. Give our navigation an equal chance, a free and an open sea, and we know that we can maintain a successful competition against the world. I ask the gentleman from Maine, after this review of our legislation, whether he will now say that our navigation has received no protection? We protected its infancy by our legislation; and after it had risen superior to all foreign competition, we have exerted all our energies to obtain for it a free trade, well knowing that, upon equal terms, it must and would be successful against the navigation of any other nation.

Let us now, Sir, examine the calculation which the gentleman has made, for the purpose of proving that our navigation cannot sustain the additional duties proposed by this bill, upon foreign hemp and foreign iron. The Committee of Manufactures, before they reported their bill to this House in January, 1821, addressed certain questions to the mercantile society of New York; two of which, with the answers, I shall take leave to read to the Committee.

“Question. What is the cost of a British ship, of say 300 tons? What of

an American of the same force and burthen; and, generally, the difference in the price of shipping, by the ton, in each country, completely equipped?

Answer. A British ship of 300 tons, equipped for sea, will cost \$24,000, or \$80 per ton. An American ship of the same quality, will cost \$18,000, or \$60 per ton.

Question. The quantity of iron and cordage to the 100 tons of shipping?

Answer. It will require four tons of iron, 1,500 pounds of copper bolts, 4½ tons cordage, and twenty bolts of duck, to the 100 tons."

In answer to another question, the same society state, that "foreign vessels would not have a preference, in our ports, over American built vessels, unless at a reduction in freight of 25 per cent. or advantages equivalent, at the port of destination."

When the gentleman was estimating the additional tax, which he alleges this bill would impose upon the navigation of the country, and was comparing it with the duties imposed by the laws of Great Britain upon the importation of hemp and of iron, and their manufactures, he must have forgotten that timber was the great and primary material which entered into the construction of a ship. In England they are compelled to purchase this article in foreign countries, and to pay the heavy expense of its transportation, whilst we possess it in abundance at home. This is the reason why a ship of 300 tons, in 1821, could have been built in this country for the sum of \$18,000; whilst the same vessel in England would have cost \$24,000. The gentleman has stated a valuable fact to the Committee, in relation to the present cost of ship building. He has informed us that American vessels are built at the present time for \$50 per ton. If this information be correct, then the difference between the cost of two vessels of the same quality, and of 300 tons burthen, would amount to \$9,000. What, then, are we to think of an argument, intended to prove that the addition of \$378 to the cost of an American vessel of 300 tons burthen, may probably break down our navigation, and drive our flag from the ocean? A ship in England costs sixty per cent. more than a ship in this country. If the additional duties proposed by this bill should even become a permanent tax upon our ship building, it would amount to only 2½ per cent. upon the first cost of the vessel. This would never be felt by our navigation. It would be but a drop compared with the ocean. It is both ungrateful and unjust for the navigation of the country, after it has been uniformly sustained by the agricultural interest, to turn round upon its benefactor and say; that, although you have protected us in infancy, and have watched over our manhood with parental tenderness and solicitude, yet we will not, in the day of your distress, grant you the trifling boon which you now solicit.

But I cannot concur in opinion with the gentleman, that the proposed increase of duty upon hemp and iron, and their manufactures, will, after a short time, be any tax upon our navigation. On the contrary, in a very few years, it will reduce the price of those articles below their present value. Upon what principle does our protecting policy rest? It is this: select proper objects, and protect their growth, or their manufacture, whilst in infancy, against destruction from foreign competition, and American skill and American industry will soon furnish them to the consumer cheaper than they can be procured from abroad. This principle lies at the very foundation of the tariff system. Abandon it, and the whole fabric is destroyed. What would the gentleman from Maine say to me, if I were to turn the argument which he has urged in opposition to hemp and iron, against wool and woollens? If I were thus disposed, I might say, you

have proposed a duty upon these articles, which will greatly increase the price of woollen cloth. The agricultural interest of the country is at present very much depressed. The laboring man, who now earns his daily bread by his daily toil, can scarcely acquire wherewithal to clothe his wife and children, and protect them from the winds of Heaven. His family are already suffering under the pressure of want, and will you grind him to the dust, by taxing the clothing which covers his nakedness fifty per cent., for the benefit of the wool grower and woollen manufacturer? If I were to use such an argument, and afterwards profess to be a tariff man, I should expect no credit for sincerity. In voting additional protection to wool and woollens, I shall act upon the general principles of the system. The growth of wool is congenial to our country; and if we should afford sufficient encouragement to its manufacture, in the course of a very short time, the industry and enterprise of our citizens will furnish woollen cloth of a better quality, and at a cheaper rate, to the consumer, than we pay at present. The much abused Committee of Domestic Manufactures, in the testimony which they have presented with their report, have furnished to this House and the Nation a most cheering fact, in relation to our progress in the woollen manufacture. The manufacturers themselves have testified, that they can convert wool into cloth, at as cheap a rate as they can do it in England. The only difference against them, consists in the higher price of wool in this country than in Great Britain. This inequality will not long exist. Our country is boundless in its capacity for the production of wool. Give us proper protection, and we can produce wool enough to clothe the world. The laborer will, therefore, eventually pay less for his clothing, not more. In the quantum of protection to woollens, all I desire is, that the duty may not suddenly be raised to such a standard, as will produce a great appreciation of price, and an immediate pressure upon the country. These are the principles upon which I shall act.

If these principles be correct, in regard to wool and woollens, I would ask the gentleman from Maine, why they do not apply, with equal force, to the manufacture of iron and the growth of hemp? Can it be for one moment doubted, that under a proper protection, hemp and iron can be produced cheaper at home, than they can be procured from abroad? We have mountains of iron ore in many portions of the Union, planted by the hand of nature, near to mountains of coal. Our water power is unlimited; we have timber in abundance; we possess the capital, the skill, and the enterprise. Can any gentleman then contend, that the American manufacturer of iron will not soon furnish it to the consumer at a lower price, than it can be transported to us from a distant country? That this will be the event, and that at no distant period, I believe as firmly as I do in my own existence. To doubt it, would be to cast a reflection upon the character of my countrymen. The additional duty which the present bill proposes upon iron, is a mere trifle, and will never be felt by the consumer.

Then, in regard to hemp, need I say any thing? It has now been clearly ascertained, from the highest authority, that American water-retted hemp is fully equal, if not superior, to that of Russia. This problem has been solved, and I feel it to be a high honor, that I have been an humble instrument in assisting to dispel the delusion which had existed in regard to American hemp. In the year 1824, I got one of my constituents to water-ret between 7 and 8 cwt. of hemp. It was received at the navy yard in Philadelphia, by order of the Secretary of the Navy, and the agent there,

at once, pronounced it to be equal to the best water-retted Russia hemp, and paid for it accordingly: It was manufactured, and sent to the Mediterranean, and after an actual experiment of considerable length, no doubt is now entertained by the Commissioners of the Navy, but that it will prove to be fully equal, in all respects, to the best Russia hemp. Indeed, in one respect, the report which we have received from the Navy Department, awards to American hemp a decided preference. It declares that "the Russia hemp is certainly liable to greater injury from transportation, and that it does sustain more or less injury in its transportation from Russia to our ports, is believed to be an unquestionable fact." It often becomes musty in the hold of the vessel, in consequence of the great length of the voyage.

But, says the gentleman, why is there no American water-retted hemp in the market? The answer is, that the prejudices which have heretofore existed against it, in the public mind, have not yet been dispelled. Our farmers have not hitherto been able to dispose of it at the same price which Russia hemp has borne in the market. Besides, they require some encouragement to induce them to abandon their ancient method of dew-retting, and take to water-retting. For this reason, the additional duty of twenty-five dollars per ton upon this article, has very properly been made progressive, rising slowly—to give our farmers time to perfect themselves in the business, and to grow the article in sufficient quantities, for the supply of our public and private ships.

I shall say nothing of the capacity of this country to produce hemp. There is a single State of this Union—a State whose soil is naturally more fertile, in my opinion, than that of any other, of which I am reminded by the gentleman now in my eye, (Mr. Clarke, of Kentucky,) capable of producing hemp in abundance to supply the demand of the world.

I need not trouble the Committee with any remarks in regard to flax; as they would only be a repetition of what I have already said, concerning the cultivation and production of hemp.

The gentleman from Maine, has used a most astonishing argument, against any further protection to hemp and flax, and iron. We ought not further to encourage our farmers to grow flax and hemp, nor our manufacturers to produce iron. And why? Because you will thus deprive the navigating interest of the freight which they earn, by carrying these articles from Russia to this country. Can the gentleman be serious in contending that, for the sake of affording freight to the ship owners, we ought to depend upon a foreign country for a supply of these articles? This argument strikes at the root of the whole American System. Upon the same principle, we ought not to manufacture any article whatever at home; because this will deprive our ships of the carriage of it from abroad. This principle, had it been adopted in practice, would have left us where we were at the close of the American Revolution. We should still have been dependant upon foreign nations for articles of the first necessity. This argument amounts to a proclamation of war, by our navigation, against the agriculture and manufactures of the country. You must not produce, because we will then lose the carriage, is the sum and substance of the argument. Am I then to be seriously told, that for the purpose of encouraging our ship owners, our farmers ought to be deprived of the markets of their own country, for those agricultural productions which they can supply in abundance? I did not expect to have heard such an argument upon this floor.

By encouraging domestic industry, whether it be applied to agriculture or manufactures, you promote the best interests of your navigation. You

furnish it with domestic exports to scatter over the world. This is the true American System. It protects all interests; it abandons none. It never arrays one against another. Upon the principles of the gentleman, we ought to sacrifice all the other interests of the country to promote our navigation. This is asking too much.

The gentleman from Maine seems to apprehend great danger to the navy, from the passage of this bill. He appears to think it will fall with so much oppression upon our navigation and fisheries, that these nurseries of seamen for the navy may be greatly injured, if not altogether destroyed.

In regard to the value and importance of a navy to this country, I cordially agree with the gentleman from Maine. Every prejudice of my youth was enlisted in its favor, and the judgment of riper years has strengthened and confirmed those early impressions. It is the surest bond of our Union. The western States have a right to demand from this government that the mouth of the Mississippi shall be kept open, both in war and in peace. If you should not afford them a free passage to the ocean, you cannot expect to retain them in the Union; they are, therefore, as much, if not more, interested in cherishing the navy, than any other portion of the Republic. The feeling in its favor contains in it nothing sectional: it is general. We are all interested in its preservation and extension. Unlike standing armies, a navy never did, nor never will, destroy the liberties of any country. It is our most efficient and least dangerous arm of defence.

To what then does the argument of the gentleman lead? Although iron, and hemp, and flax, and their manufactures, are essential to the very existence of a navy; yet he would make us dependant for them, upon the will of the Emperor of Russia, or the King of Sweden. A statesman would as soon think of being dependant on a foreign nation for gunpowder, or cannon, or cannon balls, or muskets, as he would for the supply of iron, or flax, or hemp, for our navy. Even if these articles could not be produced as cheaply in this as in other countries, upon great national principles, their domestic production ought to be encouraged, even if it did tax the community. They are absolutely necessary for our defence. Without them, what would become of you, if engaged in war with a great naval power? You would then be as helpless, as if you were deprived of gunpowder or of cannon. Without them your navy would be perfectly useless. Shall we, then, in a country, calculated, by nature, above all others, for their production, refuse to lend them a helping hand? I trust not.

The gentleman from Maine has said much about our fisheries, and the injurious effects which the present bill will have upon them. From his argument I was induced again to read the bill, supposing that it might possibly contain some latent provision hostile to the fisheries, which I had not been able to detect. Indeed, one might have supposed, judging merely from the remarks of the gentleman, without a reference to the bill, that it aimed a deadly blow against this valuable branch of our national industry. I could find nothing in it which even touched the fisheries. They have ever been special favorites of our legislation. I shall not pretend to enumerate, because the task might seem invidious, the different acts of Congress affording them protection. They are numerous. The gentleman has, in my opinion, been very unfortunate in his complaints that they have not been sufficiently protected. From the origin of this government, they have been cherished, in every possible manner, by our legislation. For

their benefit we have adopted a system of prohibitions, of drawbacks, and of bounties, unknown to our laws, in relation to any other subject. They have grown into national importance, and have become a great interest of the country. They should continue to be cherished, because they are the best nurseries of our seamen. I would not withdraw from them an atom of the protection which they have received; on the contrary, I should cheerfully vote them new bounties, if new bounties were necessary to sustain them. They are the very last interest in the country which ought to complain.

The gentleman, whilst he strenuously opposed any additional protection to domestic iron, and domestic hemp, surely could not have remembered, that the productions of the fisheries enjoy a monopoly of the home market. The duties in their favor are so high as to exclude foreign competition. We do not ask such prohibitory duties upon foreign iron, flax, or hemp. We demand but a moderate increase; and yet the fisheries, which are protected by prohibitory duties, meet us and deny to us this reasonable request.

The bill contains another provision which has been assailed by the gentleman from Maine. It proposes to repeal the law, now in existence, which gives to the distiller of New England rum a bounty or drawback of four cents per gallon, upon its exportation to a foreign country. This provision affords to New England rum a decided preference over our spirits distilled from grain, in foreign markets. It is a discrimination which certainly ought to be abolished. Did the gentleman reflect, whilst he was opposing this repeal, that, for the benefit of our fisheries, we do not allow any drawback of the duties upon foreign fish and foreign fish-oil, imported into this country? The law, in effect, declares, that if our merchants send these articles to foreign countries, they must be the production of our own fisheries. This is a remarkable case; because almost every other article, brought from a foreign country, may be exported in the same form in which it arrived, with the benefit of drawback. And yet the gentleman insists—although the article is changed from molasses into rum—that the distiller ought still to receive four cents per gallon from the Treasury, as a premium upon sending it abroad, to enter into competition with a domestic liquor, which is distilled from the grain of the farmer. Is this just? Is it equal? The truth is, if our navigating interest shall continue to oppose every measure which may be proposed in this House, calculated to promote the agriculture of the country, there is great danger, the people may at last begin to believe, that a hostility exists, in the nature of things, between these two interests. Should false alarms of this character ever be excited, they will seriously injure our navigation and our navy. I would caution gentlemen, as they value these interests, to avoid placing them in unnatural array against the great agricultural interest of the country; upon which all others must at last depend.

The gentleman has selected the year 1810, and has said, truly, that our foreign tonnage is not so great now as it was then; and that our tonnage employed in the coasting trade has not increased since that time, in proportion to the increase of our population. I ask, is this statement calculated to produce a fair impression? We all know, that for many years previous to that period, the nations of Europe had been engaged in a desolating war; one of the chief purposes of which appeared to be, the destruction of the commerce of each other. We remained neutral;

and became the carriers for the world. This circumstance imparted to our navigation a mushroom growth; and made it, in a great degree, dependant upon the continuance of foreign war. This growth had reached its utmost limit in the year 1810. After peace was restored, and the belligerent nations had turned their attention to their own navigation, we were necessarily deprived of a large portion of their carrying trade. Since the year 1818, the time when the world had settled down in a state of peace, our navigation has been gradually increasing. Since then, "it has grown with the growth, and strengthened with the strength," of our country. It now depends upon our own resources for its support. Like the pine of our mountains, supported by its native soil, it defies the wintry blast. It is no longer a mushroom plant, of hot-house growth, which the first frost will wither. It has been increasing, from year to year, since 1818, with a steady and natural growth, and is now in a most thriving and prosperous condition.

I will now descend to the humble though important articles of foreign spirits, and molasses; and after having made some observations relating to them, I shall not further trespass upon the attention of the Committee.

The tariff of 1824, abandoned, in a great degree, the peculiar interest of the grain growing States. It is true, that a distinguished gentleman from Kentucky, then a Representative upon this floor, (Mr. Clay,) did move, in Committee of the Whole, to increase the duty on molasses, as this bill proposes, from five to ten cents per gallon. His argument upon that occasion was one of the happiest efforts, he ever made upon this floor. I voted with him in Committee of the Whole; but when the bill came into the House, I gave a contrary vote. I was one of those mariners who were then willing to throw the molasses overboard, to prevent the ship from sinking. I found that our Eastern brethren were so hostile to any increased duty upon this article, that the fate of the bill depended upon the rejection of Mr. Clay's amendment. I thought it would be too selfish in me, to persist in retaining a single article, although its retention might be peculiarly beneficial to my own constituents, when I believed the effect would be to destroy a bill which contained many wise and useful provisions, calculated to promote the general welfare. I did what I believed to be right, under all the circumstances, and I have never since repented of my conduct.

The case is now altered. New England, who was scarcely willing to accept the tariff of 1824, is now seeking protection for her woollen manufacturing interest, the value of which has been estimated at \$40,000,000. The vote upon the question now before the Committee must determine, whether she is willing to grasp this protection with one hand, and, with the other, spurn the farmers of the middle and western States who are asking for a similar boon. Would such conduct be fair? By the tariff of 1824, we added $8\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. to the ad valorem duty which had formerly existed on woollen goods. Experience has shown that this increased duty, amounting in the whole to $33\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. ad valorem, has not been sufficient. I am willing and anxious to extend further protection to this suffering interest, although there is not an individual in five hundred, of my constituents, in that portion of the Congressional district with which I am best acquainted, who will *personally*, at the present time, derive the least benefit from an additional tax on woollens. I say *personally*, because I freely admit that the establishment of the woollen manufacture in this country is a great national object. The farmers in the eastern part of

Pennsylvania never can, and never will, convert their small farms, for which they have paid large prices, into sheep walks. The great woollen factories are now far distant from them. As to the grain of the middle States which they consume, it is too trifling to be seriously brought into the account. Comparatively speaking, it is unworthy of the least consideration. Yet I am, as one of the representatives of that people, willing to act with liberality, and afford these manufactories sufficient aid; but I shall expect the same liberality in return. What claims have the manufacturers upon us, which the farmers have not? The agricultural interest is now greatly depressed. This fact is notorious. It is personally known to almost every gentleman upon this floor. The supply of grain is every where too great for the demand. There is a vast surplus of labor employed in the cultivation of the soil. Are not the farmers the very bone and sinew of your country? Are they not the men who, by their virtues, must preserve your republican institutions uncorrupted in peace, and who, by their valor, must defend them in war? They are also the tax payers, by whom your government is supported. And is this the only interest in the country which is to be disregarded? Are commerce and manufactures to be protected, and is agriculture to be abandoned? Can gentlemen expect aid to their woollen manufactories, from the representatives of farmers upon this floor, and at the same time refuse to aid those farmers? Will they take, but never give? I trust they will not act so ungenerous a part.

What is the true state of the case, in regard to molasses and foreign spirits? The importation of molasses during the last year amounted to 13,362,268 gallons. A gentleman from Vermont (Mr. Hunt,) has informed the Committee that, from the year 1822 to 1826, both inclusive, the average annual quantity of molasses imported was 12,806,948 gallons; and no doubt he is correct.

The Committee of Manufactures have stated in their report, that for the last six years, the importation of foreign spirits has been between five and six millions of gallons annually. The gentleman from Maine, (Mr. Anderson,) has corrected the Committee in relation to the two last years, and has shown that, in the year 1826, the number of gallons of foreign spirits consumed in the country, amounted to 3,208,321; and in 1827, 3,183,186. And here, Sir, permit me to observe, that I regret I was not present when that gentleman delivered his able and masterly argument to the Committee, which I have since read with great pleasure; an argument which, for its spirit of conciliation, was in perfect contrast with that of his colleague. (Mr. Sprague.)

It may be, that the estimate made by the Committee of Manufactures of the quantity of molasses distilled within the United States, is too large. It is at best only conjectural, but they have given good reasons for the opinion, that about 8,000,000 of gallons of molasses are distilled in New England. The gentleman from Maine, (Mr. Anderson,) has given it as his opinion, that not more than one-sixth of the molasses imported, is distilled; whilst the Committee of Manufactures believe it to be about two-thirds. For the purpose of my argument, I shall state the distillation to be 6,000,000 of gallons, which is considerably less than one-half of the molasses imported during the last year, and is an intermediate point between the Committee and the gentleman from Maine. (Mr. Anderson.) According to this estimate, there was imported into the United States, during the last year, in the form of molasses, six millions of gallons of

foreign spirits; and in foreign spirits which had been distilled abroad, 3,183,186 gallons: making an aggregate of 9,183,186 gallons. Allowing that one bushel of grain can be converted into $2\frac{3}{4}$ gallons of spirits, which I believe to be about the average product from distillation, we find that there is annually imported into the United States, of the product of foreign agriculture, either in the form of spirits, or of molasses, for the purpose of distillation, what would be equal to more than three million three hundred thousand bushels of grain. Without increasing the consumption of spirits a single gallon, if you could prohibit the importation of foreign spirits, and prevent the distillation of molasses in this country, you would thus create this immense domestic market for the benefit of our farmers. Let me call the attention of gentlemen who represent agricultural districts to this fact. I ask, can it be the policy of an agricultural people, to consume in the form of spirits, the agricultural productions of foreign nations to an amount equal to more than three millions three hundred thousand bushels of grain, whilst that article is perishing at home for the want of a market? This simple statement of the fact, must carry conviction to every unprejudiced mind. The farmer has a right to insist that the spirits manufactured from the corn and the rye which he produces, shall be preferred by your legislation, to that which is distilled from foreign materials. Mr. King suggested that it might become proper to prohibit the importation of foreign spirits and molasses altogether. What have the Committee done? They have recommended an addition to the present duties of only ten cents per gallon on foreign spirits, and five cents on molasses; and this trifling increase has occasioned the storm which has been raised by the gentleman from Maine. (Mr. Sprague.)

Let us view this subject in another of its aspects. Some gentlemen say, we are willing to give you an additional duty upon foreign spirits; but you must not touch the molasses. This would be a mere delusion. You may impose two dollars per gallon upon the importation of foreign spirits, if you suffer it to come to our country in the shape of molasses, at five cents per gallon; I ask what protection will be afforded to the grain growers? None. Its sole effect would be to transfer the distilleries of molasses from the West Indies to New England. Leave the duty upon molasses to remain as it is; and the increase of duty upon foreign spirits which the bill proposes, will afford the same protection to the domestic distillation of molasses, that it will afford to the domestic distillation of grain. This conclusion is irresistible. I ask, what kind of protection it would be to the farmer, to impose a heavy duty upon flour, and suffer wheat to be imported free? It would be a bounty to the miller, but no protection to the grain grower. Or what protection would it afford to the wool grower, to tax foreign woollens heavily, whilst you suffered the raw material to be imported at a trifling rate of duty? Such a policy would encourage the manufacturer, but ruin the wool grower. Upon the same principle, I ask, what protection it would afford to our grain growers, if you were even to exclude foreign rum, whilst you admit its importation in the form of molasses, at five cents per gallon? Such legislation would benefit the domestic distillers of molasses; but there the advantage would end. The duty upon foreign spirits and foreign molasses, must stand or fall together. It will be a vain attempt to endeavor to persuade the Pennsylvania farmer, that he will be protected against foreign rum by a high duty, whilst the raw material out of which this rum is manufactured, shall continue to be imported at the present rate of duty.

The gentleman has contended, that the additional duty of five cents per gallon upon molasses, will operate with severity upon the poor, who use this article with their food. Can this position be sustained? If all protection to agriculture were out of the question, and if we were now debating a mere measure of revenue, the duty ought to be increased to ten cents. It would require a much greater increase of duty, than the bill proposes; to place the poor man of New England, where this article is chiefly consumed, upon the same footing with the poor man in other portions of the Union. One gallon of molasses contains sweetening matter equal to eight pounds of brown sugar. Under the existing laws, the poor man of Pennsylvania, who purchases eight pounds of such sugar, pays a duty upon it of twenty-four cents, whilst the individual who buys a gallon of molasses pays only a duty of five cents. At present the poor man in one portion of our country, thus pays nearly five times as much duty, upon an article of the same nature, as the poor man in another. I ask the gentleman to answer this argument? After the duty on molasses shall have been increased to ten cents, there will still be a great disproportion between the tax upon it and upon brown sugar. Those who use molasses in the eastern States, will not, even then, pay half as much tax to the government, as the consumers of brown sugar in the other portions of the Union. It has been estimated by a gentleman from Vermont, (Mr. Hunt,) that each individual in that State, consumes, upon an average, about two gallons of molasses in the course of a year. Admitting this estimate to be correct, by the law now in existence, he pays a duty of ten cents; and will, if this bill should pass, pay only twenty cents; whilst another individual in Pennsylvania, who has not acquired the taste for molasses, will still be compelled to pay forty-eight cents, upon sixteen pounds of brown sugar.

I have the highest names in the country to sustain me in this part of the argument. I have already referred to the former Speaker of this House. Let me now introduce the name of Mr. Madison, for the same purpose. He proposed a duty of eight cents per gallon upon molasses, in the first Congress, when only five per cent. ad valorem was imposed upon most of the articles imported from abroad. It will be observed by the Committee, that this duty was proposed, at the same time that it was agreed to tax brown sugar only one cent per pound. Mr. Madison, in support of his motion, said, "he had heard an observation made by the gentleman from Pennsylvania; (Mr. Fitzsimmons,) which he thought lessened the force of the objection taken against taxing molasses as a necessary of life, those who used it in substance escaped the tax on sugar, at least so much of it as the one was a substitute for the other; *he feared that there was no other way of coming at the duty on country rum, but laying one on the material from which it was extracted; and he did not think eight cents out of the way.*" Mr. Fitzsimmons, then a representative from Pennsylvania, and an able and practical representative he was, so far as I can judge from the debates of that day, in sustaining the proposition of Mr. Madison, observed, "as to what is used in its raw unmanufactured state, it will be sufficient to observe, that, as it is generally a substitute for sugar, the consumers will therefore avoid the tax on that article, and pay it on the other. In Pennsylvania they mostly use sugar; now, if the people there pay a tax upon that article, it is but distributive justice that the people of Massachusetts pay one on the article they use for the same purpose." And again, he contended, that, "if a less, or much less duty be laid, the opera-

tion of the tax upon sugar and molasses would be unequal on the consumer, which certainly cannot be the wish of any member, if I may judge from the conciliating disposition which is prevalent in the Committee." Finally the Committee of the Whole determined to impose a duty of six cents per gallon upon molasses.

When it was afterwards proposed to fix the duty on brown sugar at two cents per pound, Mr. Fitzimmons remarked, "that one gallon of molasses weighed eight pounds; that at six cents it did not pay a cent per pound; could it therefore be called any wise equal to such a tax on sugar? Moreover, sugar is an article of as general consumption as molasses; and when it is of this inferior quality, it enters as much, or more, into the consumption of the poor, as the other, while at the same time molasses will sweeten more according to its weight, than even the best sugar will; from which considerations I think gentlemen will be satisfied, by putting it on an equality with molasses; therefore I do not oppose one cent per pound." The Committee accordingly fixed the duty at one cent.

A duty of six cents upon each gallon of molasses, even at that day of low duties, passed the Committee of the Whole of the House of Representatives, although it was opposed, upon the floor, by all the intellectual strength of New England, then in that body. This duty was afterwards reduced (I believe, in the Senate,) to two and a half cents per gallon; and in that form the law passed. Thus the Eastern people—by means of that perseverance of character which so eminently distinguishes them, and which no man more admires than I do myself—succeeded in defeating a majority of the House of Representatives, with Mr. Madison at their head. Whilst the duty imposed upon brown sugar was one cent per pound, that imposed upon a gallon of molasses, which is equal to eight pounds of sugar, was only two and a half cents. In the history of our legislation, this original disparity has become much greater. Whilst brown sugar now pays three cents per pound, molasses is charged with only five cents per gallon. And yet a printed paper, under the signature of "Many," entitled, "The Real State of the Case," has been circulated from this House, over the Union, accusing the Committee of Manufactures of introducing the moderate additional duty of five cents per gallon upon molasses, into the bill, for the purpose of destroying it. In this manner, they have been presented before the public, as objects for the hand of scorn to point at—as betrayers of that interest which it was their duty to protect.

The gentleman from Maine seems to be ignorant of the nature of distilling grain; at least so far as it is practised in the district which I have the honor in part to represent. He spoke of the farmer going to the distiller, with fifty bushels of corn, and giving one half of the spirits which it produced, and which he estimated at fifty gallons, for distilling the other half. In my district, they have attained to great perfection in the art of distillation. I have at this moment in my pocket a letter from a respectable distiller, of the County of Chester, which informs me, that he makes three gallons of whiskey from a single bushel of grain—the one half corn and the other half rye. I believe this to be no uncommon production. The distiller receives little more for his labor than food for his hogs. It is by feeding stock, and not by distillation, that he makes his profit. For every cent which you increase the price of a gallon of whiskey, the distiller is able to give the farmer an increased price of nearly three cents for his bushel of grain. Raise the price of whiskey but five cents the gallon, and you increase the price of corn and rye from twelve to fifteen

cents the bushel. This, therefore, is a vast interest. It is not on account of the distillers that we are anxious; although their interest ought not to be disregarded. We wish to afford the farmer a home market for his grain. I do not wish to see the consumption of spirits increased a single gallon. Heaven forbid that I should! What I alone desire, and what alone I wish to obtain, is, that spirits distilled from native grain should be substituted, instead of spirits distilled from foreign materials. If this article must be used, let it be that of domestic origin.

The gentleman has depicted, in glowing colors, other disastrous consequences which would inevitably follow, from the proposed increase of duty on molasses. This five cents per gallon will destroy our lumber trade, and our fish trade, with the West Indies. He says they both depend upon molasses, because that is the article which we receive in exchange for our fish and our lumber, and that should the present bill pass, we shall no longer be able to trade our lumber and our fish with the people of the West Indies, for their molasses. The fertile imagination of the gentleman has given birth to other alarming consequences, which would follow from this extravagant duty. It will not only destroy the lumber trade and the fisheries, but their destruction will destroy the navy. Even my friend from Maine, (Mr. Anderson,) drew the same hideous pictures.

It is very fortunate that the British did not know what was our true condition during the last war. If the five cents per gallon will be productive of such fearful consequences, the British government, by withholding molasses from us altogether, might have prostrated our navy. Before the gentleman made this discovery to the House, he should have moved to close the doors. We are surrounded by British agents, and no doubt this discovery will be sent across the Atlantic, with the rapidity of an eagle's flight. Five cents per gallon of additional duty upon molasses, will destroy our timber trade, our fisheries, our commerce, our navigation, nay, even our navy. I might alter his quotation, and say, "Not a flag but by *molasses* sails." It is the article which keeps the star-spangled banner of our country afloat upon the ocean. Is the gentleman serious in exhibiting to our view all "the gorgons and chimeras" which he has called into his service?

For my own part, I fear that we shall derive but little benefit from this duty on molasses. It is too small to produce any great practical good. It will increase the price of New England rum, in a degree so trifling, that I fear it will not very much diminish its consumption.

I know that those who have acquired a taste for molasses will not abandon the use of that article, even if it should cost five cents per gallon more than the present price. I do not apprehend that any of the great interests of the country is about to be seriously affected, much less destroyed, by this tax.

The gentleman from Maine, in his concluding observations, remarked, if I understood him correctly, and if I did not I wish to afford him an opportunity to explain, that the British Parliament would pass this bill by acclamation, if presented to them. And that, if the members of the Committee had been British subjects, they could not have pleased their royal master better, than by presenting him with this production.

Mr. Sprague here explained.

Sir, said Mr. B. I am pleased to take the gentleman's explanation. More especially as he has disclaimed all intention to attribute any improper motive to the Committee.

I shall not, after this explanation, make the remarks which I intended; but shall conclude, with a few observations, in relation to the general course which has been pursued towards the Committee of Manufactures, by those who are opposed to the bill. This Committee is one of our Standing Committees. The members who compose it, both in head and in heart, will bear a fair comparison with those of any other Committee of this House. They have been most industriously employed, and no gentleman upon this floor ought either to think or to say that they have abandoned their duty. In my opinion, it would have been much more proper that no remarks, such as those which were made by the gentleman from Maine, should have been uttered upon this floor. What is the necessary inference from such observations? Either that the Committee misunderstood, or betrayed the interest which had been intrusted to their care. Either that they were weak, or that they were wicked. No gentleman upon this floor has a right to present any Committee before this House, or before the nation, in such an attitude. Another gentleman from New York (Mr. Martindale,) has said, in the progress of the debate, that, if they had been bribed with British gold, they could not more effectually have injured their own country, than by the bill which they have reported. I have no disposition to fight the battles of the Committee. Being a man of peace, I am scarcely willing to fight my own; but yet I feel myself constrained publicly to declare, that, in my opinion, the conduct which has been pursued towards that Committee has been highly reprehensible. It is the common duty of every member of this House, to protect the character of all other members from unmerited censure. We should at least exercise mutual tenderness towards each other; as we are all certain of being sufficiently abused by the public. We are often placed in such situations, that our judgment is at war with our feelings. If, under these circumstances, in addition to the performance of an unpleasant duty, our motives are to be branded with suspicion by each other, our situation must soon become exceedingly irksome. I have been led to this remark, from having felt myself compelled, this day, to vote against the bill for the relief of the widow of General Brown. It was the most reluctant vote which I have ever given. I am sorry that any improper motive should ever, either directly or indirectly, have been attributed to the Committee of Manufactures. The policy of measures, not the motives of the members of the Committee who recommend them, is the fair subject of attack upon this floor. The best apology which I can make to the House for having trespassed so long upon their attention, is to sit down, without making any formal conclusion.